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A SERIES OF PUBLICA-
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AMERICAN ABORIGINES

BIBLIOGRAPHIC NOTES ON
XOCHICALCO, MEXICO

BY
MARSHALL H. SAVILLE

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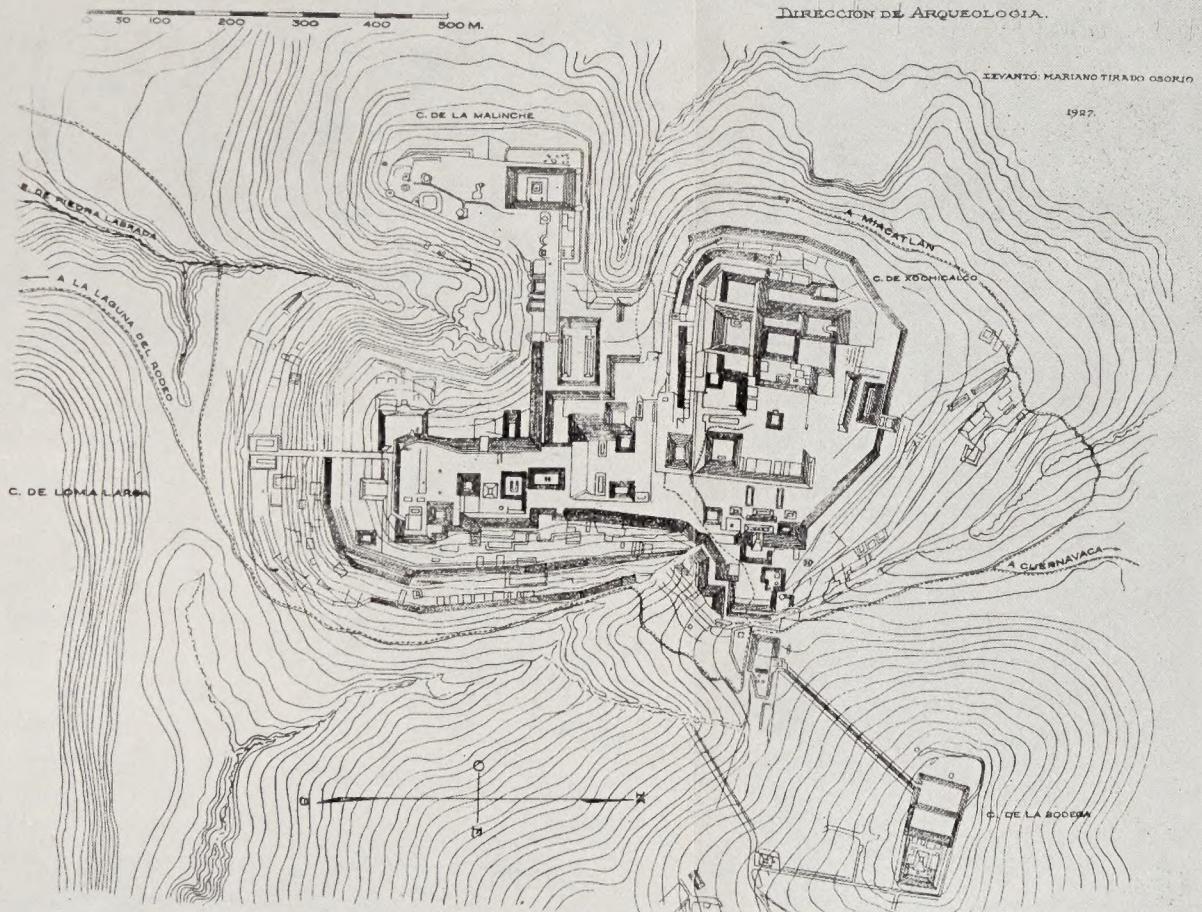
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SECRETARIA DE EDUCACION PUBLICA
DIRECCION DE ARQUEOLOGIA.PLAN OF XOCHICALCO, STATE OF MORELOS, FROM A SURVEY BY MARIANO TIRADO OSORIO, 1927
See Marquina (1928)



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BIBLIOGRAPHIC NOTES ON XOCHICALCO, MEXICO

By MARSHALL H. SAVILLE

AMONG the many ancient monuments of Mexico which have excited the admiration of travelers and the interest of the archeologist, none are more deserving of study and few are so little known as the Temple of Xochicalco, situated within a day's journey from the City of Mexico. The ruins are at the southwestern end of an extensive and beautiful valley in the state of Morelos, separated by lofty mountains at the northern boundary from the more extensive valley of Mexico.

In the center of the valley nestles the capital of the state, Cuernavaca, one of the most picturesque and lovely of the state capitals of Mexico, especially so during and immediately after the rainy season, when this favored spot is a veritable garden watered by the streams which flow through the city. The beauty of this place and its delightful climate were appreciated by Cortés, who built a residence on the outskirts of the town, and later by Maximilian.

Leaving Cuernavaca the road to the ruins of Xochicalco traverses a dusty plain for several

leagues, then descends by a winding rocky stretch to the bottom of an immense barranca, or ravine, with which the valley is deeply furrowed from north to south. A short distance after leaving the barranca one passes the large sugar plantation of Temixco on the left and continues through the dust plains intersected now and then by other deep barrancas, rendering the journey difficult and tiresome. After descending a ravine of great depth through which flows a beautiful stream, one climbs laboriously out and enters the primitive hamlet of Tetlama. The inhabitants preserve many aboriginal customs and traditions, and speak almost exclusively the Nahua language. The buildings, with the exception of the stone church, are of poles, with roofs of thatch. Being in the hot country, the temperature is always exceedingly warm. The Indians of this village and of neighboring towns are accustomed to make a pilgrimage on August 28th of each year to a certain cave in the slope of the nearby mountains, where they worship stone idols representing the Aztec rain god Tlaloc, before which they burn copal and perform various other native rites. There are said to be twenty idols at each side of the ceremonial chamber in the cave.

In Tetlama the Indians preserve in the church a map of Xochicalco, on native paper, about a yard long and fifteen inches wide. They also have a *teponaztli*, or native wooden drum.

From Tetlama to the ruins of Xochicalco is a



FIG. 1.—General view of the pyramid of Xochicalco, looking east across the plaza.

distance of two and a half miles. The old city was built on the summits of two hills, from which two beautiful lakes are seen toward the west. The entire surface was worked over to provide level spaces for the edifices, and when the site was visited by the writer in April, 1896, thousands of tons of worked stones were scattered about. The constructions are in the form of large terraces rising one above the other. On the hill on which the great temple pyramid is situated there are five terraces, all of which formerly supported buildings, whose remains now consist only of very large quantities of rectangular stones. When the writer visited the ruins, in the spring season, all the vegetation which covered the hills during the greater part of the year had been burned off, so that hardly a blade of grass was visible, the dull-gray surface being intensified by the color of the scattered building-stones, which by reason of the annual burning of the vegetation had also become dark gray.

During his short visit to the ruins the writer made a number of photographs of the temple, four of which are herein reproduced as figs. 1-4. The remains of a thin coating of stucco, painted red, was observed adhering to some of the sculptures. In one place terracotta ornaments were discovered, formerly a part of the wall decoration. This is the only instance thus far recorded, so far as the writer is aware, of the use of pottery for the embellishment of edifices in the manner of stucco so commonly



FIG. 2.—Front of the Xochicalco pyramid, looking east.

employed in many parts of Mexico and Central America.

Xochicalco is one of many important ancient cities in Mexico which has received but little archeological attention. Among these may be mentioned Papantla and Cempoalla. Some desultory work has been done at Monte Alban, and a good beginning has been undertaken in Teotihuacan and Mitla; but only at Chichen Itzá, where the Carnegie Institution of Washington has for several years conducted extensive explorations with brilliant results and which promise to be carried to completion, is there the immediate prospect that a single important city will be thoroughly investigated.

1791

ALZATE Y RAMÍREZ, José Antonio. Descripción de las antiguedades de Xochicalco. *Gacetas de Literatura de Mexico*, Mexico, suppl., tomo II, Noviembre, 20 pp., 9 figs. (Also a preliminary notice printed in tomo II, Febrero 8, p. 127.) Reprinted in Puebla, 1831.

This is the first printed description of the ruins of Xochicalco. The observations seem to have been made during the year 1777. The statement is made that Dr. Gamarra had sent to Italy a relation which in 1791 had not been published. This account is probably the work published in Rome in 1804 by Pietro Marquez. See the next entry.



FIG. 3.—A corner of the Xochicalco pyramid and stairway, looking north.

1804

MARQUEZ, Pietro. Due antichi monumenti di architettura Messicana illustrati da D. Pietro Marquez. Roma.

The part relating to Xochicalco (pp. 14-29, pls. ii-iv) has been published also in a Spanish translation by Paso y Troncoso (1881-1883). See also DUPAIX (1834).

1810

HUMBOLDT, Alexander von. Vues des cordillères, et monumens des peuples indigènes de l'Amérique. Paris. Imperial folio, text, 69 pls. (This is the second section of *Voyages aux régions équinoxiales du nouveau continent, faits dans les années 1799-1804*, par A. von Humboldt et Aimé Bonpland, Paris, 1805-1834.)

Xochicalco, text, pp. 37-41; pl. 9 gives two views of the pyramid. Humboldt writes that when he went from Acapulco to Cuernavaca in 1803 he was ignorant of the existence of Xochicalco.

1811

HUMBOLDT, Alexandre de. Essai politique sur le royaume de la Nouvelle Espagne. Paris. 4 vols.

Xochicalco is referred to in tome II, pp. 189-190.

1814

HUMBOLDT, Alexander de. Researches concerning the institutions and monuments of the ancient

inhabitants of America with descriptions and views of some of the most striking scenes in the cordilleras, written in French by Alexander de Humboldt and translated into English by Helen Maria Williams. London. 2 vols.

Humboldt did not visit Xochicalco, but used the work of Alzate y Ramírez in his description in vol. I, pp. 108-114. This work is a translation of that of 1810.

1829

SAHAGUN, Bernardino de. *Historia general de las cosas de Nueva España*. Edición de Carlos María de Bustamante. Mexico.

In the Introduction to his first book (p. xvii) Sahagun thus refers to the ruins: "There are great reminders of the monuments of antiquity of these peoples such as may be seen today in Tula and in Tollatzinco, [and] as in an edifice called Xochicalco, that is in the boundaries of Cuauhnávac. . . ." This is the earliest mention of the ruins of which we have knowledge. It was written about the year 1569 or 1570.

1830-1848

KING, Edward, *Lord Kingsborough*. *Antiquities of Mexico: comprising fac-similes of ancient Mexican paintings and hieroglyphics . . . Monuments of New Spain*, by M. Dupaix. London. 9 vols.

In vol. IV, first part, pl. 15 (folded) is a view of the pyramid of Xochicalco, and pl. 16 presents a plan of the ruins, which are described in vol. V, pp. 222-224.



FIG. 4.—Pyramid of Xochicalco, looking southwest.

1834

DUPAIX, Guillelmo. Antiquités mexicaines. Relation de trois expéditions du Capitaine Dupaix, ordonnées en 1805, 1806, et 1807, por la recherche des antiquités du pays . . . accompagnée des dessins de Castañeda . . . suivi d'un parallèle de ces monuments avec ceux . . . de l'ancien monde par A. Lenoir, etc. Paris. 2 vols., text and plates.

Xochicalco is illustrated on pls. xxxi–xxxii, in the section "Première expédition de Mexico a Xochicalco" (made during the winter of 1805). The text is on pp. 14–18. On pp. 18–20 is an extract of the work of Pietro Marquez (1804).

1835

PERDREAUVILLE, Renato de. Viage a las antigüedades de Xochicalco de orden del gobierno supremo de Mexico, en marzo de 1835. *Revista Mexicana, Periódico Científico y Literario*, Mexico, tomo I, núm. 5, pp. 539–550.

In this account the author gives the year 1754 as the time when the greater part of the carved-stone facing of the pyramid was removed by neighboring vandals, a priest, and the owners of a sugar plantation in the vicinity, where the sculptured stones were used in building ovens.

1836

VEYTIA, Mariano. Historia antigua de Mexico . . . la publica con varias notas y un apendice el C. F. Ortega. Mexico. 2 vols.

This work was written by Veytia during the eighteenth century, but was not published until 1836. In tomo I, p. 252, is the following notice:

“Que en Quauhnahuac habia otro palacio muy grande, cuya fábrica era toda de piedras grandes de cantería, tan bien labradas y ajustadas, que sin necesidad de lodo ni otra argamaza, estaban fuertemente unidas, y formaban el edificio, no solo en sus paredes, sino tambien en sus techos; que todo era de piedra, sin madera alguna, lo que seria verdaderamente admirable. De ninguno de estos dos edificios ha quedado en estos nuestros dias vestigio alguno, ni memoria de los sitios en que estuvieron.”

A note by the editor, Ortega, states: “Así se describen las de la fortaleza de Xochicalco, á seis leguas de Cuernavaca, en el número 5 de la Revista Mejicana correspondiente á diciembre del año pasado.”

Evidently this notice of Xochicalco by Veytia was written before the studies made by Alzate y Ramírez, which were not published until 1791, hence it may be considered the second known written notice of the ruins, that of Sahagún being the first.

NEBEL, Carlos. *Voyage pittoresque et archéologique dans la partie la plus intéressante du Mexique.* Paris.

Nebel illustrates, in colors, a corner of the pyramid of Xochicalco, a section of the lower platform at the left of the stairway. It is described in two pages of text. The second plate is a restoration, being Nebel's conception of the structure: a truncated pyramid formed by five superposed platforms. Two other plates, with a brief description, consist of drawings of two portions of the bas-relief sculptures on the face of the lower wall of the pyramid.

LATROBE, Charles Joseph. *The rambler in Mexico, 1834.* New York.

A good description of the site, pp. 180-190.



FIG. 5.—A portion of the southern side of the pyramid of Xochicalco.

1844

MAYER, Brantz. *Mexico as it was and as it is.* New York.

"The Ruins of the Pyramid of Xochicalco," pp. 180-187, 3 pl., 3 figs., after Nebel, 1836. Meyer visited Xochicalco in 1842, at which time the ruins were "buried in a grove of palmettos, bananas and forest trees, apparently the growth of many years."

1857

FOSSEY, Mathieu de. *Le Mexique.* Paris.
See pp. 302-303.

1861

TYLOR, Edward B. *Anahuac. Mexico and the Mexicans, ancient and modern.* London.

Dr. Tylor visited the ruins in 1856 and reported them as being "overgrown with thick brushwood." Xochicalco is described on pp. 183-195, 1 fig. (after Nebel, 1836).

1878

HUMBOLDT, Alejandro de. *Sitios de las cordilleras y monumentos de los pueblos indígenas de América por Alejandro de Humboldt.* Traducción de Bernardo Giner. Madrid.

"Monumento de Xochicalco," pp. 107-111. This is an independent translation of the description as published by Esteva (1905).

1881-1883

MÁRQUEZ, Pedro José. *Dos antiguos monumentos de architectura Mexicana ilustrados por el P.*

Pedro José Márquez. Traducidos para los "Anales del Museo" por Francisco del Paso y Troncoso. *Anales del Museo Nacional de Mexico*, Mexico, tomo II, entrega 4, pp. 281-290, 1881; tomo III, entrega 3, pp. 76-86, 1883.

Translation from the Italian of the work noted under 1804. The part relating to Xochicalco is in tomo III, entrega 3. Lamina ii is after Dupaix; lamina iii consists of drawings from pls. ii-iv of the work of Márquez.

1882

BANCROFT, Hubert Howe. The works of Hubert Howe Bancroft. Vol. IV. The native races: Vol. II, Antiquities. San Francisco.

A résumé (pp. 483-494) of the works of various explorers describing the ruins. Valuable for its bibliographic notes.

1884

OBER, Frederick A. Travels in Mexico and life among the Mexicans. San Francisco.

Ober visited Xochicalco in 1881 and describes the ruins on pp. 408-412, with an illustration after Nebel.

1885(?)

ROBELO, Cecilio A. Xochicalco. Cuernavaca. 12 pp.

The account is not dated, but the place of publication is given as Cuernavaca. See Peñafiel (1890), Robelo (1902).

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1886

BATRES, Leopoldo. Les ruines de Xochicalco. *La Nature*, Paris, tome 14, pp. 508-510, 3 pl.

1887

CHAVERO, Alfredo. Mexico á través de los siglos. Tomo I, primera epoca. Historia antigua. Mexico, Barcelona.

For Xochicalco see cap. II, pp. 256-259; cap. III, p. 276; ills. on pp. 256, 259, 272, 276. The description contains no new information.

BANCROFT, Hubert Howe. A popular history of the Mexican people. San Francisco.

A notice of Xochicalco is on pp. 113-114, 1 ill.

1888

SELER, Eduard. Die Ruinen von Xochicalco. *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, Berlin, XX Verhandlungen, pp. 94-111, ills.

See also under 1904.

1890

PEÑAFIEL, Antonio. Monumentos del arte Mexicano antiguo. Berlin.

Xochicalco, capítulos VIII-IX, pp. 31-45 (French and English translations in the same volume); segundo volúmen de láminas, láminas 170-211. This is the most extensive collection of views of the ruins of Xochicalco yet published. Peñafiel reprints the description of Antonio Alzate y Ramírez and also an account written by Cecilio Robelo, printed in *La Semana*, tomo I, núm. 9, Cuernavaca, 1888, and in 1902 as a separate publication.

1891

BOBAN, Eugène. *Documents pour servir a l'histoire du Mexique.* Paris.

In the second volume of text (p. 272, no. 98) is described, as contained in the Aubin-Goupil collection of the National Library of France, the copy or tracing of "an ancient geographical chart with the representation of Xochicalco in the center." There seems to have been a legend that, near the lake in the vicinity of Xochicalco, lived a siren which charmed voyagers who neared the lake, as noted on the margin of the map.

1894

BOUCARD, A. *Travels of a naturalist. A record of adventures, discoveries, history and customs of Americans and Indians. Habits and descriptions of animals chiefly made in North America, California, Mexico, Central America, Columbia, Chili, etc., during the last forty-two years.* Privately printed. London.

The ruins of Xochicalco are described on pp. 75-79.

1897

GAMA, Manuel. *Un monumento prehistórico. Congreso Internacional de Americanistas, Actas de la Undécima Reunión, Mexico, 1895.* Mexico.

For Xochicalco see pp. 528-532.

1901

LE PLONGEON, A. Xochicalco pyramid tells story of the lost continent of Atlantis. *New York Herald.*

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A fanciful attempt to interpret the hieroglyphs carved on the stone-faced cornices of the teocalli.

TWEEDIE, *Mrs.* Alec. Mexico as I saw it. New York.

For Xochicalco see pp. 310-320, 3 ills.

1902

ROBELO, Cecilio A. Ruinas de Xochicalco. Traduccion al Ingles por el Dr. Eugenio Le Baron. Cuernavaca. 27 pp.

Contains Spanish and English texts on opposite pages. The date of the original publication is attributed to 1888.

1903

TOGNO, Juan B. Xochicalco, 1892. In *Colección de Documentos para la Historia Mexicana* publicados por el Doctor Antonio Peñafiel. Sexto cuaderno. Mexico. 29 pp.

This detailed survey of the ruins was made for the Exposition in Spain to commemorate the four hundredth anniversary of the Columbian discovery. It contains all the measurements made by the survey, but it is not accompanied with the corresponding plans.

1904

SELER, Eduard. Die Ruinen von Xochicalco. *Gesammelte Abhandlungen zur Amerikanischen Sprach- und Alterthumskunde*, Berlin.

Xochicalco, Zweiter Band, pp. 128-167, 4 photos, abb. 2-78. This is a revised and enlarged edition of the article published in 1888.

1905

McGEE, W. J., and THOMAS, Cyrus. Prehistoric North America. Vol. XIX of The history of North America, Francis Newton Thorpe, editor. Philadelphia.

On the plate opposite p. 228, the lower photograph is a view of the restoration of the temple, from the model made under the direction of W. H. Holmes for the United States National Museum.

PEÑA Y RAMÍREZ, A. de la. Las ruinas de Xochicalco. *Anales del Museo Nacional*, Mexico, segunda época, tome II, pp. 91-102.

This report bears the date Abril 24 de 1874.

ESTEVA, Adalberto A., editor. Mexico pintoresco. Antología de artículos descriptivos del país.

Monumentos de Xochicalco, pp. 157-161, from the work of Humboldt (1878). This is an independent translation of the description as published by Giner.

1906

BRETON, Adela. Some notes on Xochicalco. *Transactions Department of Archaeology, University of Pennsylvania*, Philadelphia, vol. II, pt. 1, pp. 51-67, pls. iv-viii, figs. 1-13.

This is the most important study of the sculptured facings of the terraces of the main teocalli of Xochicalco. The paper reproduces the author's well-executed and faithful drawings.

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1910

ABADIANO, Francisco. Quetzalcoatl el gran constructor de Palenque, Xochicalco-Chicomoztoc-Culhuacan. Mexico.

Xochicalco is described on pp. 13-20, 25. The photograph of the pyramid opposite p. 13 is after Saville.

BLACKISTON, A. Hooton. Xochicalco. *Records of the Past*, Washington, vol. IX, part vi, pp. 298-308, 14 ills., 2 plans.

The photographs showing the famous temple were taken after its restoration by Leopoldo Batres in 1909.

1912

BATRES, Leopoldo. Las ruinas de Xochicalco. *Reseña de la Segunda Sesión del XVII Congreso Internacional de Americanistas*, Mexico, 1910, Mexico.

Batres describes his work of "restoration" of the pyramid, pp. 406-410.

PURDIE, Francis Baillie. Ancient temples and cities of the New World. Xochicalco. *Bulletin of the Pan American Union*, Washington, vol. 3, pp. 480-499, 16 ill., Oct.

1920

PALACIOS, Enrique Juan. What the hieroglyphics of the great monument of Xochicalco say. *32d Annual Archaeological Report, Appendix to the Report of the Minister of Education*, Ontario, Toronto, pp. 54-65, 2 ills.

An essay in Spanish by the Mexican student Palacios, translated by Dean W. R. Harris. Palacios believes that "Xochicalco dates from the tenth century of the common era; that is to say, it has now been in existence for about 1000 years."

1926

CALLEGARI, Guido Valeriano. Il mirabile misterio di Xochicalco. *Vie d'Italia e dell'America Latina*, Rome, vol. II, 6 pp., 12 figs.

ROOK, Edith Sone. Xochicalco or the hill of flowers. *Art and Archaeology*, Washington, vol. XXII, no. 3, pp. 93-98, 4 ills., Sept.

TOTTEN, George Oakley. Maya architecture. Washington.

Xochicalco is treated on pp. 228-229, pl. xcv. One of the illustrations is of the model of the temple pyramid made under the direction of William H. Holmes and now in the National Museum at Washington.

1928

ROQUE, J. Ceballos Novello. Tepoztlan, Teopanzolco y Xochicalco. In *estado actual de los principales edificios de Mexico. Contribucion de Mexico al XXIII Congreso de Americanistas*. Secretaria de Educacion Publica. Mexico. Pp. 107-116, figs. 13-30.

MARQUINA, Ignacio. Estudio arquitectonico comparativo de los monumentos arqueologicos de Mexico. *Contribucion de Mexico al XXIII*

Congreso de Americanistas. Secretaria de Educacion Publica. Mexico.

In this work there is a description of Xochicalco on pp. 15-16, accompanied with a colored drawing of sculptures on the pyramid, p. 10; a small plan of the group, p. 12; another description, pp. 44-45, with a plan of the group and a plan of the pyramid [our pl. I]. The author concludes his study by the statement: "We may thus consider Xochicalco as a type intermediate between the cities properly Toltecas of the central part of Mexico, and those of the Mayas in the south."

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